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New York

President:	Mr. Hmoud	(Jordan)
Members:	Argentina	Mr. Oyarzábal
	Australia	Ms. King
	Chad	Mr. Mangaral
	Chile	Mr. Errázuriz
	China	Mr. Wang Min
	France	Mr. Araud
	Lithuania	Ms. Murmokaitė
	Luxembourg	Ms. Lucas
	Nigeria	Mr. Laro
	Republic of Korea	Mr. Oh Joon
	Russian Federation	Mr. Iliichev
	Rwanda	Mr. Nduhungirehe
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Wilson
	United States of America	Mr. DeLaurentis

Agenda

The situation in Côte d'Ivoire

Thirty-third progress report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (S/2013/761)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Côte d'Ivoire

Thirty-third progress report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (S/2013/761)

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): Under rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Côte d'Ivoire to participate in this meeting.

Under rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedures, I invite Ms. Aïchatou Mindaoudou Souleymane, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Côte d'Ivoire and Head of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire, to participate in this meeting.

On behalf of the Council, I welcome Ms. Mindaoudou, who is joining us today via video-teleconference from Abidjan.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2013/761, which contains the thirty-third progress report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Operation in Côte D'Ivoire.

I now give the floor to Ms. Mindaoudou.

Ms. Mindaoudou: It is a great honour for me to address the Security Council for the first time since I assumed my responsibilities as Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Côte d'Ivoire, in July 2013.

Côte d'Ivoire continues to make good progress, and the country is firmly on the path to lasting peace and stability. Socioeconomic reforms implemented by the Government are beginning to have tangible results, with good economic growth, an influx of foreign investment and a renewed private sector. The Government has initiated a series of institutional reforms aimed at enhancing political inclusiveness, including putting in place legislation requested by the political opposition on the financing of political parties.

As the report before the Council (S/2013/761) underscores, the Government, under President Ouattara's leadership, has made significant conciliatory gestures towards the political opposition, notably by provisionally releasing from prison several high-ranking individuals associated with former President Laurent Gbagbo. The Government has also taken steps towards addressing the root causes of the Ivorian crisis, including by enacting legislation on land tenure issues and nationality, which are critical for the national reconciliation process. Dialogue between the Government and 11 opposition parties in the context of the permanent framework of dialogue continues, and has resulted in important progress in the political reconciliation process.

While the former ruling party, the Front populaire ivoirien (FPI), still refuses to participate in the permanent framework of dialogue, important advances were made with respect to direct dialogue between the FPI and the Government as well as with the ruling party. In early December, the FPI and the Rassemblement des républicains (RDR) met for the first time in a decade. The holding of that meeting in a cordial atmosphere generated important momentum, and I welcome the shared commitment expressed by both parties to continuing further dialogue in a reconciliatory manner.

The FPI also resumed direct dialogue with the Government in September and held meetings, most recently on 15 January. Although there was no concrete breakthrough on outstanding issues, those meetings are an important demonstration of the will of political stakeholders in Côte d'Ivoire to address their differences through constructive dialogue. As the report before the Council indicates, the FPI has proposed the establishment of a new dialogue forum — the états généraux de la République, which would include a wider spectrum of civil society — that the President has agreed to review closely.

The Government has made efforts to advance security sector reform. It has also set an ambitious target of disarming the full caseload of former combatants by June 2015. In the area of human rights, the Government has extended the mandate of the special investigation and examination cell, which is tasked with investigating crimes committed during the post-electoral crisis. Meanwhile, during his New Year address to the nation, President Ouattara announced that he had requested the Minister of Justice to review the possibility of releasing additional prisoners detained during the post-electoral crisis. He also reiterated the Government's commitment to intensifying efforts to ensure the voluntary and

safe return of political refugees, with the support of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the respective countries where the political refugees reside. We have already witnessed the return of several senior officials and military personnel affiliated with former President Gbagbo and the FPI, and refugees across the borders with Liberia, Ghana and Guinea. Those actions have contributed to enhancing the political climate in Côte d'Ivoire.

Côte d'Ivoire's economy is on a fast track to recovery and growth rates are impressive. That is due in part to enhanced political stability and the financial support of its international partners. It is also worth noting that the Government has continued to strengthen its presence at the local level, including through the recent nomination of members of the corps préfectoral. At the same time, local and traditional leaders are increasingly engaged in supporting social cohesion. They are also closely engaged in addressing intercommunity tensions and the challenges with regard to the evacuation of protected forests, particularly in the west.

Notwithstanding the good progress that is being made and the Government's genuine resolve, Côte d'Ivoire has continued to grapple with security-related challenges and the situation remains fragile. Recurrent incidents of intercommunity and ethnic violence, as well as armed robbery and organized crime, continue to pose a major challenge to stability and security. The national security apparatus still requires considerable reform, including in order to rid it of those elements that are involved in incidents of violence and abuse. The lack of clarity with regard to the status of dozos, or traditional hunters, further contributes to the insecurity and poses a threat to the human rights of citizens in many areas of the country. The Government has responded proactively to addressing the violence by launching in November, with the support of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI), an operation aimed at disbanding armed groups and removing illegal checkpoints.

In the west of the country, serious threats to peace and security persist due to the illegal circulation of weapons, coupled with networks affiliated with the former regime, former combatants and other criminal elements on the border with Liberia. In addition, most of the root causes to the conflict are still to be fully addressed in that region. On a positive note, the good cooperation between the Governments of Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia, as well as between UNOCI and the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), continues to yield good results and we have not witnessed a major cross-border attack in nearly a year.

Earlier this month, I visited several localities in the west of Côte d'Ivoire, where I met community and religious leaders and local authority representatives. There, I again witnessed the fragility of the situation on the ground and the need for the international community to remain alert and fully engaged in order to ensure that the times of chaos, violence and insecurity are buried deeply in the past. My interlocutors stressed the importance of promptly addressing the root causes of the conflict and of ensuring that justice is served.

UNOCI is in the process of reconfiguring its military component and of consolidating its presence in the west and other high-risk areas, as requested by the Council. By the end of December, the Société Général de Surveillance had been withdrawn from the country and the national security institutions had assumed full responsibility for providing the security of high-ranking members of Government and other political figures. By the end of June, we will have completed the drawdown of 1,700 troops, as requested by resolution 2112 (2013), ensuring a strengthened force capacity in the west. UNOCI is also working closely with the Secretariat on planning for the appropriate composition, posture and strength of the UNOCI force up until and during the Ivorian elections, which will be developed in the context of a strategic review of UNOCI and UNMIL that will take place next month. Specific proposals will be provided to the Council in our May report.

The promotion of a culture of respect for human rights is essential to successful national reconciliation. It is of crucial importance that impunity for human rights violations end and that the perpetrators be brought to justice, irrespective of their status or political affiliation. I remain concerned about the lack of progress in bringing to justice the perpetrators of the most heinous attacks committed in 2012, including those on the Nahibly camp for internally displaced persons and the killing of seven United Nations peacekeepers in Para.

The United Nations in Côte d'Ivoire and the Government have worked closely to develop ambitious yet realistic benchmarks for sustainable peace, which are annexed to the report before the Council. We will continue to work closely with the Government in order to achieve those important benchmarks. As requested

by the Council, UNOCI and the United Nations country team conducted an extensive evaluation of UNOCI's mandate with a view to identifying those tasks that could eventually be handed over to the country team and the broad timelines for that possible handover. The preliminary results of that exercise are provided as an annex to the report before the Council.

However, I wish to underscore two points raised by the Secretary-General in his report. First, the resource constraints facing the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes in a stabilizing context such as that of Côte d'Ivoire have put severe limits on the capacity of those bodies to assume additional tasks. Many agencies have been forced to close or limit their operations in Côte d'Ivoire owing to more pressing challenges elsewhere in the world. Secondly, more fundamental is the importance of ensuring that peacekeeping transitions, both security and civilian, in any country underscore the primary goal and objective of handing over any residual peacekeeping tasks to the sovereign authorities of the country. Going forward, that is what we will be prioritizing in Côte d'Ivoire, working closely with the Government.

Looking ahead, as Côte d'Ivoire and many of its neighbours in the West African region move towards presidential elections in 2015, it is important to work now to put in place the conditions for an environment conducive to peaceful elections. In that regard, considerable progress will be needed in key areas, notably with regard to electoral reforms, disarmament and security sector reform. Côte d'Ivoire will continue to need support in consolidating the gains achieved to date.

It is essential to continue to press upon the Ivorian leaders the need to preserve the gains made so far and to engage in dialogue in a spirit of mutual accommodation, in particular in the preparation of the election in 2015. That is particularly important as there has been a recent resurgence of hate speech in some media outlets. The international community cannot allow for such a trend to take root or to be tolerated as that was one of the triggers of the 2010 crisis. In that regard, I am engaging closely with political, religious and community leaders, who have an important role to play in defusing tension and condemning such behaviour.

The continued support of the Security Council, Member States and international and regional partners remains essential in order to enable the country to overcome the numerous challenges, particularly with regard to security, national cohesion and genuine political dialogue. It is equally important that the United Nations be fully equipped to continue to fulfil its responsibility in supporting the Government's efforts to stabilize the security situation, protect civilians, strengthen State authority and promote reconciliation. I wish to thank the Council for its continued support for our collective effort in support of the people and Government of Côte d'Ivoire as they stride towards sustainable stability.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank Ms. Souleymane for her briefing.

I now give the floor to the representative of Côte d'Ivoire.

Mr. Bamba (Côte d'Ivoire) (*spoke in French*): My delegation takes note of the excellent report of the Secretary-General contained in document S/2013/761, of 24 December 2013. We thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Côte d'Ivoire, Ms. Aïchatou Mindaoudou Souleymane, for her outstanding briefing on the situation in Côte d'Ivoire. We congratulate her on the remarkable work she has accomplished in such a short time since her arrival in Côte d'Ivoire six months ago.

I would like to make a few brief comments on some aspects that my delegation views as critical with respect to the security situation, political dialogue, the national reconciliation process and economic recovery.

With regard to the security situation, we agree with the report of the Secretary-General that the security situation has improved significantly since the Head of State assumed responsibility for the defence sector. During the past year, no major attack against the security forces or public institutions was noted. The establishment of the Centre for the Coordination of Operational Decisions has reduced the incidence of serious crimes such as raids and armed robberies. That has led to a positive trend in the security index recognized by the United Nations, which rose from 3.8 in 2012 to 1.3 in 2013 across the country.

That improvement has created conditions conducive to the return of international organizations that had left the country — including the Japan External Trade Organization, AfricaRice, the African Development Bank, which will be in the country until 2015, and the Regional Office of UNESCO — and to the planned establishment of a regional office of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in Côte d'Ivoire. However,

as the Special Representative noted, concerns remain with regard to the border with Liberia, given the ongoing presence of mercenaries and the illegal trafficking of weapons.

Nevertheless, we note significant calm in the west of the country. No attacks have been reported there for over a year. Thus, the situation has improved significantly following the strengthening of the quadripartite cooperation among the security services of the Côte d'Ivoire, those of Liberia, the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) and the United Nations Mission in Liberia.

With regard security sector reform (SSR), major activities undertaken by the Ministry of Defence include the strengthening of the legal and institutional frameworks and the reorganization of the armed forces; the strengthening of the managerial and operational capacities of the army; the improvement of the security situation; the promotion of unity within the army and the bolstering of social cohesion; the promotion of the spirit of defence; the management of the military forces; the development of a training system; contributions to subregional, regional and international peace and stability; and the promotion of good governance.

I would like to point out that the Head of State personally presided over 43 sessions of the National Security Council and the Prime Minister presided over six sessions. Some 32 per cent of the SSR goals have been met, and 44 per cent are in the process of being met. The remaining 24 per cent should soon be met. In that regard, we thank our partners, in particular UNOCI, and all of our international, bilateral and multilateral partners, who provide valuable assistance, especially in the framework of the consultative group that meets monthly to take stock of the SSR situation in Côte d'Ivoire.

With regard to disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR), as of 31 December 2013 the Authority for Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration had returned or reintegrated 27,351 former combatants, representing 91 per cent of the goal of 30,000 sought for the end of 2013. Weapons collected include 6,521 Kalashnikov assault rifles, 6,398 grenades, 409 shells, 632 rockets and 390,777 munitions. It should also be noted that the DDR process led by the Côte d'Ivoire Government is fully inclusive in that it integrates former combatants from both sides without exception. There are branches of the DDR Authority in the south in Abdijan; in the centre in Bouaké; in the north, in Korhogo, Ferké, Boundiali and Bouna; and in the west, in Man, Duékoué, Toulepleu, Guiglo and San Pedro. The DDR Authority was even able to account for former combatants who fled to Togo, Ghana and Liberia.

With respect to funding, the State of Côte d'Ivoire has financed 80 per cent of that process. In that regard, we would like to thank UNOCI, the European Union, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Bank and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) for their support for the process. I note that there are still 47,000 former combatants to be reintegrated or returned. The task is daunting, but thanks to the experience of the Authority for DDR, we hope that by the end of 2015 all former combatants will be effectively reintegrated or reinstated. In that regard, we wish to thank in advance the European Union, the African Development Bank and the Government of Japan, which have indicated their intention to join UNOCI, UNDP, the World Bank and IFAD in helping Côte d'Ivoire to achieve all its DDR goals.

With regard to the particular case of the dozos, the traditional hunters who participated in some clashes during the post-election crisis, which the Special Representative of the Secretary-General mentioned, initiatives have already been undertaken by the Ministry of the Interior and Security to urge them to return to their traditional activities. That commitment was strongly reiterated recently by President Alassane Ouattara in his capacity as supreme commander of the army.

With regard to political dialogue, we welcome the thaw in the political situation in Côte d'Ivoire, as was underscored by the Special Representative. In that regard, President Alassane Ouattara has demonstrated his leadership in creating a peaceful political environment and give the opposition room to better express its differences of opinion in a democratic context. That commitment has been exressed in powerful gestures, such as the provisional release of 14 members of the former regime and the upcoming review of other cases that could also benefit from that measure; decisions taken by the Council of Ministers to unfreeze the bank accounts of members of the former regime; and appeals by the President to the politicalopponents and army officers and soldiers in exile to return to the country.

The President of the Republic's initiatives have led to a relaxing of the situation, which we commend. That

was constructively manifested by the resumption on 15 January of direct dialogue between the opposition and the Government, which is promising; the effective return to Côte d'Ivoire on 17 January of the former Director General of the Autonomous Port of Abidjan, a leading member of the party of former President Gbagbo; and the return from exile of 1,288 former members of the Forces de défense et de sécurité with a guarantee for their safety, who were welcomed on Friday, 24 January at a ceremony held in the parade grounds of the Ministry of Defence, thanks to an appeal launched by President Alassane Ouattara. Before arriving, I was informed that the former Minister of Defence of President Gbagbo had also returned to Côte d'Ivoire this weekend.

Along the same lines, it is worth mentioning the draft law on the status of the opposition, which has been adopted by the Council of Ministers and will soon be submitted to the National Assembly, as well as the draft text on the funding of political parties. All of those developments clearly indicate President Alassane Ouattara's intention to firmly establish a genuine and transparent culture of democracy in Côte d'Ivoire.

With regard to national reconciliation, after two years of operation the Truth, Dialogue and Reconciliation Commission officially provided its report to the President on 21 November 2013. The report recommends in particular the effective implementation of the rural land law, the adoption of a gender perspecyive in the country's overall policies, the reduction of inequalities in regional development, the establishment of a republican army with appropriate and modern resources, good governance, the fight against impunity and the strengthening of democracy. On that occasion, the President of the Commission noted that the majority of Ivoirians consulted want to uncover the truth about the period from 1990 to 2011 to be established. The Dialogue, Truth and Reconciliation Commission therefore intends to make a public appeal to those who were victims between 1990 and 2011.

With regard to the economic recovery, under the leadership of President of the Republic and with the coordination of the Prime Minister, Côte d'Ivoire is experiencing a robust economic recovery, as evidenced by the growth rate of 8 per cent achieved in 2013, and that of 9 per cent predicted for 2014. The country is consolidating its position as the world's leading cocoa producer, having produced 1,449,000 tons of cocoa beans in 2012-2013, representing 40 per cent of world cocoa production.

In general, numerous economic and social infrastructure construction or restoration projects have been completed or are in progress, in particular in the sectors of roads, water, education, health, social housing and energy. Regarding the energy sector, it should be noted that the sixth gas turbine of the Ivorian Electricity Production Company, a private operator, came into service last week, increasing the production capacity of the national grid by 1,600 gigawatt hours a year.

It is useful to recall that an international forum to promote investment will be held in Abidjan between 29 January and 1 February. Some 2,200 participants are expected, and the forum will be of great relevance to the economic recovery of Côte d'Ivoire.

On the basis of all of these positive developments, the Government of Côte d'Ivoire, fully aligned with the United Nations approach, supports the planned drawdown and reconfiguration of UNOCI's military and police presence between now and 2015, as mentioned in the report before us.

Finally, the Government of Côte d'Ivoire, aware of its primary responsibility to re-establish lasting peace and stability in the country, is committed to playing its full role in achieving the operational objectives agreed in coordination with the United Nations, in the context of the strategic planning of the transition from UNOCI to a Peacebuilding Commission configuration.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers. I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 10.45 a.m.